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## Waste cleanup hinges on EPA

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The federal Environmental Protection Agency will be handling the operation and cost of cleaning up 13 hazardous waste sites on Guam if the project is approved by EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C., according to an official.

Jim Canto, Guam Environmental Protection Agency division head for air and land programs, said approval is likely but until GEPA receives it in writing, it's not official.

Once it is approved, the cleanup operation will move quickly, he said.

Canto said the Northern Marianas and the Trust Territory have been keeping inventory of hazardous waste sites and will be included

in the cleanup.

But if the project is not approved, the owners of the hazardous waste sites will be responsible for cleaning them up, Canto said.

Some of the 13 sites include Naval Station, government of Guam departments, private business sites, Public Utility Agency of Guam, and University of Guam experiment station.

Canto said the wastes — mostly pesticides and some acids and chemicals — have been stored at the sites for about a year.

GEPA originally had requested a federal grant to conduct the cleanup of the 13 identified sites.

GEPA received verbal notice of the proposed federally conducted cleanup a few weeks ago, Canto said.

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